

City Projects

U+P+D+A+T+E

City of Rockville, Maryland

Summer 2000



A view from Maryland Ave. of the proposed design for the expanded City Hall

Expanded City Hall in the Works

Built in 1962 and expanded and renovated in 1982, Rockville's City Hall is past its prime. Meeting space is limited, office space is sparse, and the technology "backbone" and the energy systems are outdated.

With the city's population growing, the demands for City services are increasing. That means more employees need to be hired if the City is to continue to provide the high quality of services that Rockville residents have come to expect.

"Rockville has been growing rapidly over the past few years. Every phase of the growth process requires more staff people at City Hall," said Mayor Rose Krasnow. "As new residents start to move in, we need more policemen, more parks, more recreational programming, and so forth."

For example, in 1962, the City maintained 68.93 miles of streets. By 1982, that grew to 126.33 miles, and in 2000, the City maintains 137.55 miles of streets. In addition, in 1962, the City had 18 parks (or 150 acres) to care for, and in 1982, there were 42 (or 575 acres). That number has jumped to 64 parks (or 950 acres).

To cope with the current space crunch, the City moved several departments out of City Hall, including the Department of Community Services and Public Work's Inspection Services. This, in the long run, is expensive and less convenient for residents.

"An expanded City Hall will be far more efficient. We pride ourselves on one-stop service for our residents and the business community," said Krasnow. "That becomes difficult when staff is scattered."

The expanded City Hall is being designed to accommodate 260 employees, which includes 21 future positions. This staff size is projected to serve a total City population of 60,000 residents, the estimated maximum population growth for the city. The city's current population is approximately 49,000.

"The expansion also will help us take advantage of new technology," said Bo Ferguson, Rockville's Project Implementation Coordinator. "We'll be able to update the building in a way that takes full advantage of all the new technology so that we can provide our residents with even better service."

For example, the Mayor and Council Chambers and meeting rooms will be designed with enhanced audiovisual features for presentations. It also will provide an informational infrastructure that will allow the City to take full advantage of available technology with a computer training room and a telework hoteling center.

The design stage for the expansion began in July and will last approximately one year. The basic footprint of the building is fixed at this point, but the interior layout is still being designed. Construction is expected to take 18 to 24 months.

"The expansion is being planned to minimize inconvenience," said Krasnow. "Our intent is that our citizens will continue to receive the same high quality of service during the whole process."

When completed, the new building will face Maryland Ave. rather than Vinson St. It will include a more ceremonial entrance, more meeting space, increased security, modern technology, and more efficient energy systems. In addition, departments that interact will be located near each other making the building more "user friendly" for both employees and citizens.

CALL 301-315-6507 FOR MORE INFO

Rockville Moves into New Millennium with Fiscal Year 2000 CIP

The 21st century is here, and the City of Rockville is heading into the new millennium full steam ahead with the Fiscal Year 2001 (FY01) Capital Improvements Program (CIP). This year's CIP entails an array of projects that will improve the already high quality of life in Rockville.

Here is a rundown of just a few of the projects that are included in the FY01 CIP:

Recreation and Parks

- Cabin John Forest Preserve**
This project funds the design and development of a 20-acre forest-preserve park located along the Cabin John stream valley within the Tower Oaks development. The area is an environmentally sensitive, stream-valley forest. The concept plan includes a pathway around the forest edge and a nature trail across the interior forest.
- Energy Study and Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning, Refrigeration, and Boiler (HVACRB) Improvement**
This project funds an energy performance and equipment improvement study at major City facilities that have significant energy plants. The project provides for the repair and replacement of HVACRB systems at City Hall, the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre, the Senior Center, the Lincoln Park Community Center, the Swim Center, the Water Treatment Plant, the Gude Dr. Maintenance Complex, and other buildings. It is a cooperative program with the State Energy Administration to evaluate energy performance and make recommendations for energy savings.
- F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre and Social Hall Improvements**
The project funds renovations and improvements to the theater and social hall. These will include: purchasing equipment to create a ticket booth and redesigning and modifying the theatre seating area.
- Fallsgrove Park/School Site**
This project funds the construction of a 10-acre active park in the central section of the development. If a school is necessary, the City will provide the space to Montgomery County. The park will include playfields, basket-

- ball and tennis courts, playgrounds, pathways, and wooded areas.
- Thomas Farm Community Recreation Center**
This project funds a community recreation center at in the Fallsgrove development (formerly Thomas Farm). The first community center west of I-270 will include two gyms, two or three multi-purpose rooms, a computer learning center, a fitness center, indoor racquet courts, a kitchen/snack bar, locker rooms, offices, and storage.

CALL 301-309-3300 FOR MORE INFO

Public Works

- Wootton Pkwy. Bridge Rehabilitation**
This project funds needed repairs to the Wootton Pkwy. Bridge over Watts Branch Creek and includes cleaning, repainting of all structural steel, repair and sealing of concrete, and replacement of compression seals and expansion joints in the roadway deck.
- Alsace Lane Stream Improvements**
The project provides funding for 400 linear feet of gabion basket stabilization to severely eroded banks near homes on Alsace Lane. The project was recommended in the Rock Creek Watershed Management Plan. The stream erosion in side or rear yards is a potential threat to several houses.
- Northeast Park Stormwater Management (SWM) Retrofit**
This project funds the modifications to the existing, dry SWM pond to provide water quantity control via one-year, 24-hour extended detention storage. The dry pond will have a micropool at the rebuilt riser. A forebay or other device to collect trash and pre-treat runoff also is proposed at the upper end of Northeast Park. This project is recommended in the Rock Creek Watershed Management Plan.
- Maryland Ave. Extension**
This project would provide additional traffic capacity to Maryland Ave. between Middle Lane and Beall Ave. It also would promote local circulation and help eliminate non-local traffic on the nearby residential section of Jefferson St.

CALL 301-309-3200 FOR MORE INFO

City Projects

Recreation and Parks

Hungerford/Stoneridge Elwood Smith Comm. Center

General renovations and accessibility upgrades will be made, and a room will be added • construction to take place in summer '01

Dawson Farm Park

The City is converting the Ritchie Pkwy. dead-end to greenspace • public artwork and historical interpretation will be added • improvements will be made to the historic granary foundation • functional changes will be made to the storm water management facility • construction scheduled for this fall and winter

King Farm

King Farm Homestead

Lead paint abatement will take place • the dairy barns will be painted • roof improvements will be made to the main house • work to be completed by May '01

West End

Skate Park at Welsh Park

The final design is being reviewed • it will include ramps, quarter pipes, etc. for in-liners, skateboarders, and bikes • construction to take place this fall

Twinbrook

Street Tree Replacement

This multi-year, ongoing project will remove and replace street trees that have been determined to be hazardous, in major decline, or severely damaged by utilities

General Projects

Ballfield Improvements

Improvements are being made to the drainage at the Isreal Park Ballfield • construction expected this fall • City will co-fund stadium lighting at Rockville High School

Millennium Trail

Phase I (along Wootton Pkwy from Falls Rd. to Glen Mill Rd.) design complete and grant awarded • construction to begin in fall • the design of Phase II (along Norbeck Rd., from Gude Dr. to Wootton Pkwy.) has begun

Montrose Community Center

The work will include general renovations, accessibility upgrades, and roof replacement • construction scheduled for the fall or winter

I-270/Rt. 28 Bike/Pedestrian Bridge

The design stage has begun • a citizen/staff taskforce is being formed

Nature Center

To be located at Civic Center Park near Old Avery Rd. meadow area • the design is complete, and a grant has been received • construction is scheduled for the fall

Playground Equipment Improvements

The City is replacing playground equipment at Woottons Mill Park, Glenora Park, and Twinbrook Park • the work will be completed by the end of September • equipment also will be replaced at Broome Athletic Park and Dogwood Park this winter and spring

Glenview Mansion Historic Master Plan

Plans for the long-term historic preservation of Glenview Mansion and grounds • in cooperation with Recreation and Park Advisory Board, Cultural Arts Commission, Historic District Commission, docents, and residents

Glenview Mansion and Cottage

Partial removal of lead paint and repainting of exterior wood surfaces

F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre

Modifications will be made to the lobby area • the City will purchase equipment to create a staffed box office for centralized ticketing operations

City Maintenance Complex

A feasibility study is planned for improvements and expansion of the facility • a consultant will be hired

Energy Performance and Equipment Improvement Study

The study will focus on all major City facilities • it will include energy audits, system performance, equipment replacement/upgrades, maintenance operations, and energy savings • the objective is to provide highly efficient, functional mechanical systems • capital costs will be offset by savings in energy spending

Parks Topographical, Tree, and Boundary Survey

This survey will update the topographical data for City parks and grounds in the east side • it will result in hard copy and digital form data compatible with the City's Geographic Information System (GIS) and computer applications • the data will provide for improved planning, asset inventory, and maintenance • the project will take place in the fall, winter, and spring • the same project currently is underway in the central portion of the city and will be completed in September

Improvements Continue at City's Water Treatment Plant



(Left) The City's #1 clarifier is still under construction. It is estimated that the work will be completed by the end of August.



(Left) Work on the City's #2 clarifier has been completed. The clarifier helps remove the solids from the water.

Last year, the City began upgrading its water treatment plant to modernize the facility and expand its capacity. In addition to new and tougher federal and state environmental mandates, the rising demand for water in a growing Rockville made the work necessary.

"On a hot summer day, it takes everything this plant has to get the amount of water needed out there," explained William Sizemore, Rockville's Water Treatment Plant Supervisor.

In fact, the demand can soar to eight million gallons on some particularly steamy days.

Currently, the plant produces an average of 5.3 million gallons of water per day to meet the demands of its customers. When all the work is complete, the plant will have the ability to pump 14 million gallons per day.

The upgrades include:

- Refurbishing the intake structure, which draws water from the Potomac River.
- Construction on the plant's two clarifiers.
- Replacing mechanical devices such as the pumps that move the water more than five miles from the Potomac River to the city.
- Improvements to Sandy Landing Rd., which leads to the plant.

The City completed the refurbishing of the intake structure last year. This structure, located on the C&O Canal on Bealls Island, received three new pumps. The City also raised the pumps above the 100-year flood elevation of the river, because the structure was subject to periodic flooding.

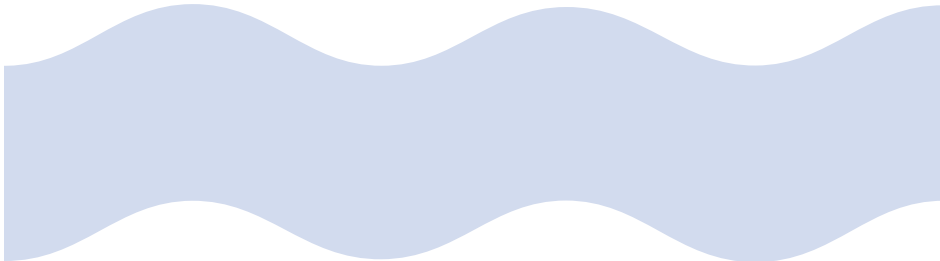
The pump replacement is now in the engineering and design stage, and the filter replacement should go to bid in November.

Sandy Landing Rd. is now under construction. The improvements will not change the structure of the road but will fix drainage problems, reconstruct the stream that runs near the road, and patch ruts and holes.

"With the proper drainage and crowning, we hope that Sandy Landing Rd. will maintain itself," said Sizemore. "However, even with the improvements, the road will retain its rustic appearance."

All work on the Water Treatment Plant has been supervised by Rockville's Public Works Department. The entire project will cost approximately \$6.5 million, and the City has obtained \$4.6 million worth of low interest loans to defray the costs.

CALL 301-309-3080 FOR MORE INFO



City Projects

Public Works

East Rockville

Horners Lane Water Tank

The City will remove the tank in the fall, prior to start of the Highland Rd. project • the Department of Recreation and Parks is working with the surrounding neighborhoods to determine the use of the land

Hungerford/Stoneridge Cabin John Relief Sewer

The City is considering options to increase the capacity of parts of the old, undersized, sanitary-sewage pipe that currently runs from Rockville Town Center through the Hungerford/Stoneridge neighborhood • community input is being sought • the City has hired a private consultant to review the project

Potomac Woods/ Horizon Hill Falls Rd.

The City is building a bike trail on Falls Rd. from Wootton Pkwy. to Dundee Rd. on the east side • the construction is underway

West End Great Falls Rd.

The project will improve the safety and appearance of the road from Monument St. to W. Montgomery Ave. • this project has been funded by the State of Maryland • construction is scheduled to begin in spring '01

General Projects

Avery Rd. Right Turn Lane

The goal of the project is to improve the capacity and safety at the intersection • the project will include the installation of a sidewalk/bikeway • the initial bids received were twice as high as the budgeted amount • the City is looking into

rebidding the project • the start date is unknown because of rebidding

Brick Sidewalks in Historic District

Preparing contract for award • the City expects the work to start as soon as a contract is awarded in the fall

Asphalt Maintenance

Annual project is currently underway • project expected to be completed in September • a large portion of work will be in the area west of I- 270 • see a listing of the streets affected on pg. 2 of Rockville Reports • signs will be posted in advance on roads to be affected

Dale Drive

The design has been finished • the City expects construction to start this summer

Highland Ave.

The work will improve the street with the addition of a turn-around, a storm drain, and asphalt paving • the survey work has been completed • the design work is to start this summer • the City is attempting to tie the project into the removal of the water tank from the park at the end of the street • construction is scheduled to begin in spring '01

Neighborhood Traffic Control

The following upcoming speed hump project are pending neighborhood approval: Mt. Vernon Pl. • there also will be new traffic control lighting installed on Wootton Pkwy. (see article on pg. 4) • construction of the traffic signals on Wootton Pkwy. scheduled to be complete by September

Gude Drive Noise Study

Phase II of the study will begin pending the award of the project to a contractor • the results are expected in September



Front entrance of the renovated center.

Lincoln Park Community Center Unveiled

The Lincoln Park Community Recreation Center provides City residents with a place to gather, learn, and have fun.

Recently, Rockville completed renovations on the structure, which included adding space to house a computer center, an improved childcare facility, and a police substation. There also is new fitness equipment.

Currently, the City is planning a rededication ceremony that is expected to take place in September.

CALL 301-309-3166 FOR MORE INFO

Making Rockville Bike Friendly

Rockville's Mayor and Council are committed to making Rockville a city where you can conveniently and safely use your bike to get to work, go shopping, or just have fun.

It all began in 1996 when, during Rockville's Visioning Fair, residents voiced their desire for the creation of a bicycle-friendly and more walkable community. The Mayor and Council responded to this input by directing staff to develop a plan for incorporating bicycling as a means of transportation and recreation in the city.

As a result, a comprehensive and inclusive planning process began that culminated in the adoption of the Rockville Bikeway Master Plan in 1998.

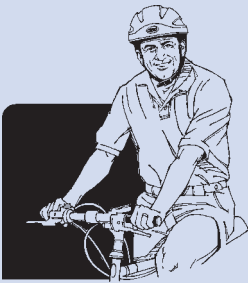
In 2000, the Mayor and Council allocated \$5.4 million to build the bikeway system over the next six years, with substantial financial support from the Federal Transportation Enhancements Program (TEA-21).

So far, the City has:

- Implemented a safety and education program, which includes bike rallies, school visits, cable TV spots, safety tips, and printed material.
- Established that staff will review each new development project for safe bicycle access and any plans for existing road repairs or upgrades for bike compatibility. For example, an extensive system of off-road and on-road bicycle facilities has been designed into the new Falls Grove and King Farm development plans.
- Created a Citizen Bicycle Advisory Committee that meets monthly to review bikeway projects, advise on bike parking and maintenance issues, and discuss ideas for future improvements
- Received a transportation enhancement grant for \$741,000 to complete a three-mile section of the Millennium Trail (a 10-mile, off-road bike trail around Rockville).
- Installed 50 bike racks in 1999, and 50 more will be installed in 2000.
- Placed bike lockers at all City-owned facilities.
- Initiated a Spot Improvement Program to allow citizens to call or write in regarding maintenance issues.
- Awarded design contracts for a safe bike/pedestrian crossing of I-270 at Rt. 28 and Phase II of the Millennium Trail.

In the past few years, Rockville has come a long way in its goal to improve bicycle safety and accessibility. As we enter the new millennium, the City strives to make biking a convenient alternative for its residents.

CALL 301-309-3344 FOR MORE INFO



Important Rockville Numbers

Emergency Water/Sewer	301-309-3093
Emergency Public Works Maintenance	301-309-3020
Inspection Services	301-309-3250
Parks Administration	301-309-3330
Public Works Administration	301-309-3220
Public Works Operations	301-309-3010
Public Works Utilities	301-309-3022
Tree Maintenance Requests	301-309-3033
Water Treatment Plant	301-309-3080

Wootton Pkwy. Improvements Mean Less Congestion

Anyone traveling down Wootton Pkwy. during the morning rush hour is well aware of the traffic issues that the City faces. In an effort to minimize delays and make the roadway safer for pedestrians, Rockville will be installing traffic signals and a right turn lane later this summer.

The new right turn lane will be located at the southern entrance of Wootton High School. The design is now complete, and construction is scheduled to being in early August.

The purpose of the new lane is to separate school traffic from morning commuters.

Two new signals also will be installed – a pedestrian signal at Rockshire Shopping Center and a traffic signal at Wootton High School’s southern entrance.

The design work on both signals has been finished, and construction is slated for late August. The signals should be fully operational by the end of September. When complete, they will offer pedestrians two convenient locations for crossing Wootton Pkwy. In addition, traffic near the school will operate more efficiently.

All three projects will cause minimal impact on residents living near or on the parkway or those who use it. You will, however, see equipment in the area throughout August.

CALL 301-315-5777 FOR MORE INFO

Mayor and Council Protect Open Space

Rockville prides itself on being a “green city,” lush with trees, bushes, and flowers. In fact, the City has received numerous awards – such as the Tree City USA award and second place in the international Nations in Bloom competition – for its efforts to preserve, protect, and enhance open space, and its environmentally sensitive maintenance practices.

Protecting and enhancing open space continues to be a top priority for the Mayor and Council of Rockville.

To aid in these objectives, the Mayor and Council have initiated a Parkland Acquisition program to provide funding for acquisition of additional open space throughout Rockville.

“When and where it makes sense, we want to add parkland to existing parks and create new ‘pocket parks’ for neighborhoods,” said Councilmember Bob Wright. “By budgeting for such a program, we make everyone aware of how much we value open space.”

Currently the City is working to establish a master plan for the potential acquisition of private lands adjacent to public parks or in environmentally sensitive areas. The acquisition of such lands may entail purchasing easements or the outright purchase of the area. The land that Rockville has already acquired and that which could be acquired in the future will act as buffers between parks

and neighborhoods. Two sites have already been acquired – an addition to Welsh Park located at the end of Luckett St. and an addition to Maryvale Park adjacent to First St. Nineteen other sites are being considered as part of the program.

The parkland-acquisition program will receive funding from the City’s budget through 2005 and is partially funded by the Maryland Program Open Space and Land and Water Conservation Fund.

CALL 301-309-3330 FOR MORE INFO

Lincoln Park Drainage Project = End to Soggy Yards

Soggy backyards after a heavy rain are often a problem for many Lincoln Park residents. In an effort to remedy this situation, the City is implementing the Lincoln Park Drainage Improvement project to address pervasive problems with groundwater experienced by the community.

The project entails designing a storm sewer along Ashley Ave. and Lincoln Ave. and allowing the homeowners to connect into the City’s collector pipe. Rockville will supervise the installation of connections to the public drainage system paid by homeowners via Com-

munity Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding and a new deferred payment program – similar to the Driveway Apron Program.

The Ashley Ave. design is complete, and 40 percent of the residents along Ashley Ave. have indicated that they want to connect to the City’s pipe. The 40 percent participation rate was set by the Mayor and Council as the minimum amount of participation to warrant Rockville investing in the collector pipe.

City staff met with residents in June to discuss the project, its construction, and its impact. Although the project was initially planned for late-summer construction, this has been delayed because no construction bids were received during the public bidding process.

Staff currently is considering alternative strategies to obtain proposals from contractors. The City’s construction will likely occur in spring 2001.

Citizens may choose to install their own private sump pump system in advance of the City work. Lincoln Park residents may contact the City’s Rehabilitation Specialist at 301-309-3211 to coordinate installation of the private system.

The design of the Lincoln Ave. portion of the project is about 50 percent complete, and the City has approved the pipe connections between the homeowners and Rockville’s storm

sewer. This work is slated to take place over the next couple of years.

During the project, residents may experience disruptions in traffic, temporary sidewalks, and some construction noise.

CALL 301-309-3234 FOR MORE INFO

What Are Those Bales of Straw?

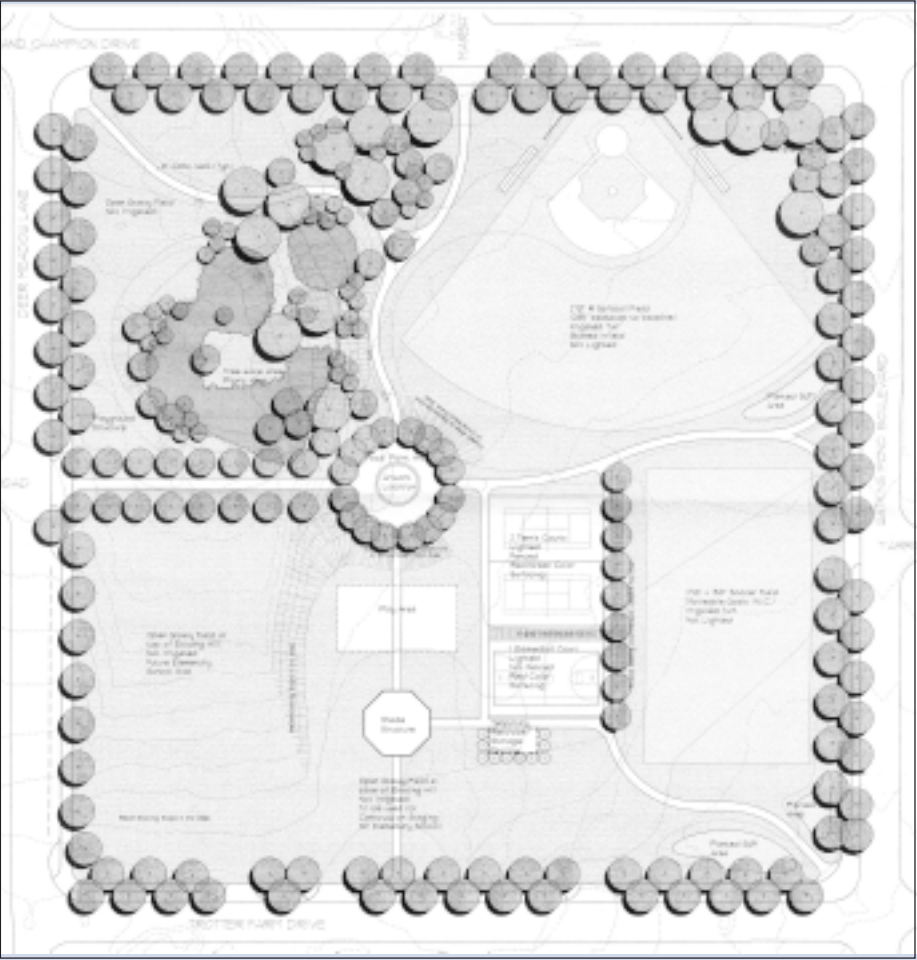
The City is responding to growing concerns of alga blooms in the storm water ponds by placing bales of straw in them.

While algae are a naturally occurring by-product of stormwater ponds, too much can lead to foul odors and poor appearance. The alga blooms are due to the high amounts of nutrients present in the watershed draining to the stormwater pond.

The City, following the recommendation of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Freshwater Fisheries Service, is using bales of freshly cut barley to control the algae. As the barley decomposes, it produces a natural algacide to help reduce the amount of algae in the pond.

CALL 301-309-3200 FOR MORE INFO

City Adds to Parkland with King Farm Park/Elementary School



Did you know that most homes in the city are less than one-quarter mile from a City park? As Rockville grows, the Mayor and Council want to continue to provide residents with this benefit. As a result, the City is working with residents to create the King Farm Park/Elementary School.

The concept plan, developed along with neighborhood residents from the development, is now complete and construction is underway. When finished, the park will include ballfields, playgrounds, pathways, passive space, and tennis and basketball courts. When the school is built, it will be operated and maintained by the school system. All other park areas – about nine of the 12 total acres – will continue to be owned and maintained by the City. The elementary school is not yet scheduled for construction by Montgomery County Public Schools.

The site also is under consideration by the Cultural Arts Commission as a site for the Art in Public Places program.

Construction is estimated to be completed by the end of the year.